

Ringside Coach



Adults learn skills to help youth “fight fair” when conflicts happen. These skills will help adults to be effective bystanders.

Why?

Anyone who works with youth knows they have conflicts with friends and boyfriend/girlfriends. Kids need the skills to resolve differences of opinion and work through strong emotions before a conflict turns disrespectful or abusive. Adults can support healthy, respectful, and safe relationships by intervening to help youth talk through their emotions or get help to resolve conflict.

Where and When?

Ringside Coach is an ideal activity for supportive adults (e.g. teachers, pastors, librarians, coaches, or scout leaders) who work with kids in a community- or faith-based organization or school. *Ringside Coach* can be used anytime and anyplace to train adults how to act when they observe a conflict between two or more youth.

How?

The *Choose Respect Ringside Coach: Scenarios and Solutions* can be found in the Zone 2 resources on the USB Flash Drive that comes with this Playbook.

Supportive adults who participate in this training will understand how a bystander can intervene when a disagreement gets out of hand. *Ringside Coach* is a simple, four-step process that can be used to coach youth in conflict to a resolution. When an adult sees conflict, he or she can become a Ringside Coach who guides youth through the resolution process.

Review the four-step process presented below with the group. Then, the group should take turns acting out the scenarios—one person volunteers to be the “ringside coach” and two people pretend to be youth involved in a conflict. These role plays will help the adults gain skills for real life. The bystander—or Ringside Coach—should follow each step below to help cool a heated situation.

Organize a brief role play activity.

Use the possible scenarios for this practice session. Complete one to three practice sessions based on the amount of time available to you.

- For each scenario, ask for three volunteers: two to play kids in a disagreement and one to play the Ringside Coach.
- Distribute the scenario roles from the *Ringside Coach* scenarios to participants who volunteered. *The Ringside Coach Scenarios and Solutions* can be found on the Zone 2 Folder on the USB Flash Drive that comes with this Playbook.
- Ask each volunteer to read the scenario to prepare for their roles.
- Briefly explain the scenario to the entire group to “set the scene.”
- Direct volunteer participants to act out their roles according to the directions they have been given.
- After volunteer participants have finished, recap the 4-step method. Ask the entire group for feedback on what the Ringside Coach did well and on what he/she could improve.

Want to Do More?

- Collect success stories of effectively resolving conflicts and use these as case studies to teach youth conflict resolution skills.

Stop!

As the Ringside Coach, say to the kids in conflict:

- Take a time out.
- By taking a time out, you can calm down and think. Then each of you can consider the issues and your response.
- The issue or problem does not need to be solved this minute.
- Remember, what you want is a long-term resolution, not a quick fix.

Talk and listen!

Communication is the key to managing conflicts effectively. By talking, the parties acknowledge that a problem exists. Ask the kids to take turns expressing how they feel about the situation:

- Identify the problem, as you understand it. Tell your side of the story without emotion. Use “I” statements, and avoid “You” statements. Focus on WHAT happened, not WHY it happened. Try to use words the other person will understand and accept.
- Listen fully to the “other” side of the story. Ask questions to clarify a point. Listen in a way that shows you are interested. As you listen, put your own thoughts and feelings on hold. Pay close attention to what the other person is saying through words and body language. Show you want to hear what your friend says. Put yourself in the other person’s place and pay special attention to feelings and what is going on with the other person.
- Retell what you heard the other person say. Describe what you understand about what the other person thinks and feels. Start with “You . . .” Show respect and compassion for what the other person said by your voice, body language, and words.

As the Ringside Coach, confirm that each person has been heard.

Plan!

- Remember, the goal is not to prove who's right or wrong—the goal is to find a win/win solution for all parties involved.
- Focus on the problem—not the individuals. When egos become part of the conflict, it is difficult to resolve the problem.
- Find common areas of agreement—agree on the problem; agree on the objective; and agree on the solution.
- Suggest ways to resolve the situation. Select a win/win solution; find a way to resolve the problem that benefits both parties.
- Determine the actions that are needed to come to a successful resolution.

Try it out!

- Try to do the solution you agree upon.
- Agree on a follow up. Offer to meet again if the concern persists.

Resources Needed:



Meeting space



*Ringside Coach Conflict
Scenarios and Solutions*

Evaluation:

Document what you accomplish using Choose Respect tracking tools:

- **Stand Up & Be Counted**

Keep track of play participants and audience members. The Zone 2 Evaluation Tools contain a sign-in sheet.

- **Cheers & Changes**

After the play is complete, note your successes, challenges, and opportunities for the future. The Zone 2 Evaluation Tools contain a worksheet to help you do this.

Choose Respect feedback tools are recommended if you implement multiple plays. Assess what adults learned from and thought of a series of Choose Respect activities using Choose Respect feedback tools:

- **Adult Feedback**

After completing a series of activities with youth, collect information for your evaluation. The Zone 2 Evaluation Tools contain a feedback form to help you do this.

Ringside Coach

Conflict Scenarios & Solutions



Scenario 1:

Ask two participants to volunteer as actors to play Youth A and Youth B in Scenario 1.

Youth A:

You think that Youth B has taken your book because he/she lost his/hers. Typical behavior! Tell Youth B how you will not tolerate him/her stealing your stuff and don't hold back.

Youth B:

Youth A has lost it! He/she thinks you stole his/her book, but they're wrong. React with surprise and anger to his/her accusations.

Ringside Coach:

You encounter two youth arguing over a book. One student accuses the other of stealing the book.

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- Listen fully to the "other" side of the story. Ask questions to clarify a point. Listen in a way that shows you are interested. As you listen, put your own thoughts and feelings on hold. Pay close attention to what the other person is saying through words and body language. Show you want to hear what your friend says. Put yourself in the other person's place and pay special attention to feelings and what is going on with the other person.
- Retell what you heard the other person say. Describe what you understand about what the other person thinks and feels. Start with "You" Show respect and compassion for the other person by your voice, body language, and words.
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Scenario 2:

Ask two participants to volunteer as actors to play Friend A and Friend B in Scenario 2.

Friend A:

You and your friend used to hang out every day after school and sometimes on weekends. You hear that your friend has been spreading rumors about you. You know the rumors are not true, and cannot understand why your friend would do this to you. Tell your friend (Friend B) how this makes you feel disrespected.

Friend B:

You value your relationship with Friend A. You told some of your other friends about the time you spend together, and now it has turned into a nasty rumor. You don't know how things got this way. You have wanted to apologize to your friend, but you didn't know how. The only way you know how to handle the situation is to deny it.

Ringside Coach:

Two kids are upset because of gossip. One feels the other is spreading rumors about him/her and is hurt by the betrayal. The other youth denies the accusation.

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Scenario 3:

Friend A:

You just found out that your friend has been looking at your girlfriend/boyfriend and making lewd comments. Tell your friend how mad this makes you feel. When he/she denies it, tell him/her you know he/she is lying.

Friend B:

You don't know what's gotten into your best friend. He/she is really mad about something, but you're not sure what. When he confronts you, deny the accusation.

Ringside Coach:

Two friends are fighting because one believes the other was looking at his girlfriend/boyfriend and making disrespectful comments. One is making accusations while the other denies he/she said anything.

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